

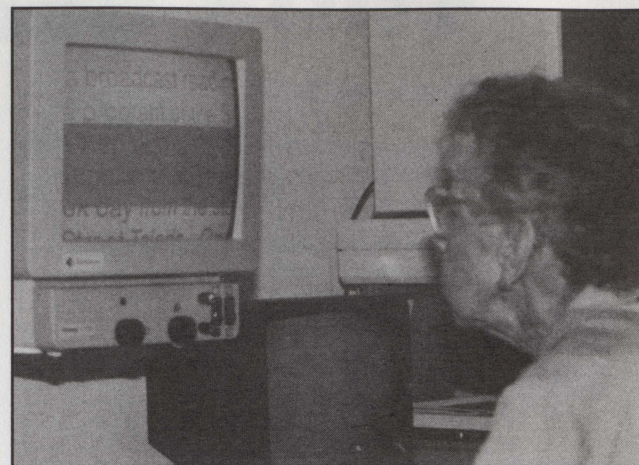
## 150 View New Low Vision Devices At Agency Tech Fair

On March 23 & 24 The Sight Center sponsored an adaptive Technology Fair to provide clients and the general community with information about high tech blindness and low vision products.

Approximately 150 professionals and consumers from throughout the agency's 23 county service area attended the event.

Attendees experienced the latest equipment available for people with vision impairments. Vendors were available for hands-on individual training on items. Seven vendors (who represented all the major suppliers of high tech low vision and blindness products) from across Ohio and Michigan demonstrated their products and services.

At the rapid pace which technology advances it is often difficult for clients to keep up. There are few local resources for clients to turn to for information and support. However, The Sight Center filled the void with this event and is currently planning a similar event for next year.



Devices such as this closed circuit television (CCTV) was one of many low vision products featured at The Sight Center's Technology Fair.

## SIGHTINGS

*Sightings is published twice a year by The Sight Center. The Sight Center helps maximize the independence of individuals who are blind or visually impaired and minimize the incidence of visual impairment.*

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*Director of Public Relations*

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Sightings is available in braille or audio cassette by request.

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The Newsletter of The Sight Center (Toledo Society for the Blind)

# SIGHTINGS

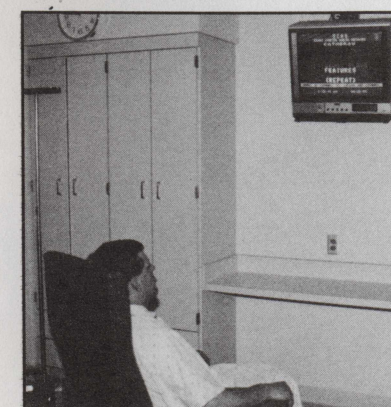
## SCAN Expands Broadcasting

Patients at Medical College Hospital can now receive the latest news and information right in their rooms without having to read a newspaper or watch television news. A unique service can keep patients up to date on local and national current events.

SCAN, also known as The Sight Center Audio Network, is now available on MCH's Channel 35.

SCAN is a radio reading service that brings various newspapers, books and magazines to people who are visually impaired or print handicapped. In addition to MCH people who are visually impaired can hear SCAN on the second audio programs (SAP) of WBGU, Channel 27, Bowling Green or WGTE, Channel 30, Toledo.

The partnership between MCH and The Sight Center provides additional access to printed information for the entire community -- not just people who are visually impaired, says Gary Hoffman, SCAN Director of Broadcasting.



"It makes sense that The Sight Center join together with MCH to make the printed word available to the entire community. Some patients are physically unable to hold a newspaper or magazine during their hospital stay," Hoffman said. "Just because people are temporarily print handicapped doesn't mean they have to miss their local news."

This venture displays the dynamics of



SCAN volunteers read various newspapers and magazines seven days a week.

SCAN's usefulness not only to persons who are visually impaired, but also to persons who are temporarily print handicapped because of an illness.

MCH is the first hospital in northwest Ohio to carry this service.

SCAN's MCH debut comes at a time when the service has extended its broadcast to include local weekend programming.

A recent grant from the Toledo Community Foundation helped make local weekend programming a reality. Previously, SCAN listeners heard programming from another Ohio radio reading service on weekends. SCAN now broadcasts seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m.

Along with the implementation of weekend programming, SCAN has also expanded with 30 new volunteers who will rotate the reading schedule with three seasoned "anchor" readers.

**Spring  
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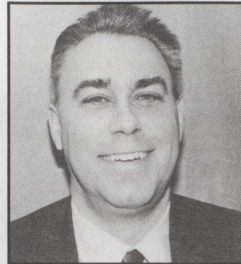
SIGHTINGS 2

## Moving Into The Future

As the information age takes us into the 21st century the fact remains -- blindness is on the increase. The incidence of blindness has been projected to double between the years 1990 and 2000 and double again between 2000 and 2010. The Toledo Society for the Blind continually evaluates its services to fulfill its mission of **"providing services that maximize the independence of individuals who are visually impaired and blind and minimizing the incidence of visual impairments."**

To prepare for the rapidly growing visually impaired popula-

tion, The Sight Center offers additional and more diverse services. A comprehensive low vision clinic and adaptive technology are just a few of the programs which help people with vision loss remain independent. The agency also addresses the emotional aspect of vision loss through peer support groups.



First and foremost, however, primary emphasis is service to individuals to help them make their life more independent and fulfilling.

Thank you for your past support. Please join us and continue your support for us as we move into the next century.

## New Agency Service Helps Businesses Comply with ADA Regulations

ADA regulations can create a confusing labyrinth for businesses and people with disabilities. A new service offered by The Sight Center helps alleviate some confusion as well as offers printed material in accessible formats.

The Sight Center Accessible Transcription Service, also known as SCATS, helps businesses comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act by putting printed information in accessible formats including braille, large print and audio cassette. SCATS was made possible through a grant from the General Mills Foundation among others which helped pay for start-up costs.

The ADA, which celebrates

*The Sight Center Accessible Transcription Service (SCATS) provides documents in accessible formats, such as Braille, for reasonable prices.*

its fifth anniversary this year, requires businesses and government agencies to be accessible to people with disabilities. This may include printed materials available to the public such as menus, maps, brochures, signs, direc-

SEE SCATS, PAGE FOUR.



*A recent trip to the Toledo Museum of Art allowed Nikki Runkle to closely view artwork using her specialized glasses that she received at The Sight Center's Low Vision Clinic.*

Nine-year-old Nicole Runkle is very much like a typical third-grader. She enjoys school, loves hanging out with her friends and surprisingly, likes to cook.

While Nicole does the things most third graders do, she often goes about them differently. Nicole has a condition called coloboma of the iris, an absence of ocular tissue, which makes it difficult for her to see. She has to use specialized glasses and magnifiers she got at The Sight Center's Low Vision Clinic.

Nicole is one of the younger clients at the agency's Low Vision Clinic. She is in a special class at Elmhurst School in Toledo, but with her new glasses she is able to have social studies and science classes with the rest of the third grade. Nikki's teacher, Mrs. Darlene Limmer said, "The glasses and magnifier she got from the clinic help out a lot. She can keep up easier with the rest of the class." She added, "She is a perfect student and she really works hard at school."

Don't take her teacher's word for it. Nikki has her own thoughts on how her low vision devices help her do the things she loves. "I can see better (with the devices)...I've learned to cook a lot of things my Grandma makes like cookies and scalloped potatoes," she says. No doubt the clinic has improved the quality

**"The glasses and magnifier she got from The Sight Center help out a lot. She can now keep up easier with the rest of the class."- Darlene Limmer, Nicole's teacher**

## Low Vision Clinic Improves Life For Those With Limited Sight

of Nikki's life, especially when it comes to food.

Nikki is just one of hundreds The Sight Center has helped live with a condition called low vision. Low vision, which affects millions of Americans, can be defined as vision that is not effectively cor-

rected by regular eyeglasses, contact lenses or intraocular lens implants. People who have low vision do have some useable

sight.

Many factors cause low vision in people of all ages. Birth defects, glaucoma, inherited diseases and injuries can all cause

SEE CLINIC, PAGE FOUR.



*Goldie Dillard, a Low Vision client, uses specialized lenses to help her read.*

## Low Vision Product Catalog Available

Reading, telling time, playing cards.

These are just some of the everyday tasks that can be made easier for people with limited sight.

The Sight Center's Low Vision Product Consumer Catalog has many items which enable people with vision impairments to live independent lives.

Large number watches, kitchen knives and check writing guides, are just several of the items offered in the catalog.

To receive a free catalog call (419) 241-1183 or 800-624-8378.



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## More SCAN News...

The Sight Center Audio Network, known as SCAN, recently debuted a new program to coincide with the addition of local weekend programming.

**SCAN Selected Readings** is a weekly 60 minute show dedicated to offering people who are print handicapped access to local and regional writing talent not otherwise available.

Writers interested in showcasing their work on the program need to submit short stories or novels which can be read in 55 minutes or less. (About 25-30 pages, double spaced.)

For more information contact Gary Hoffman at (419) 241-1183 or 800-624-8378.

## Volunteer Merl Thomas Receives United Way Volunteer Award

Sight Center volunteer Merl Thomas has always gone above and beyond the call of volunteer duty. He was recently rewarded for his hard work and dedication with the Henry L. Morse Community Service Award.



*Merl Thomas receives his award from representatives from the United Way of Greater Toledo.*

Merl has given numerous hours of time at the agency and truly believes in The Sight Center's mission. He helped develop the agency's low vision clinic. This project involved securing the cooperation of more than 250 optometrists and ophthalmologists in the agency's service area.

In addition, he played a key role in development of the agency's endowment fund which allows for the purchase of eye glasses for those that cannot afford them.

**CONGRATULATIONS, MERL!!**

### ●CLINIC, FROM PAGE 3

vision loss. Clinic staff works with the patient and their personal eye doctor to determine their needs, provide an effective treatment and evaluate their progress as needed.

The Low Vision Clinic can not improve actual vision, but some devices can be provided to improve the quality of remaining vision. Some of these devices include magnifiers, closed-circuit televisions, telescopes and large print reading materials. Many people have changed the way they see because of the visual aids they have received from the clinic.

### ●SCATS, FROM PAGE 2

tories and manuals.

While complying with these regulations may be perceived as costly and time consuming, SCATS offers an economical and efficient alternative.

In addition to braille, large print and audio cassettes, the service can create tactile maps and floor plans with a specialized copy

machine.

Businesses or individuals should contact Kim Whitney of SCATS, for transcription information or Dawn Christensen, The Sight Center's ADA consultant, for additional information about ADA requirements and guidelines. Both can be reached at (419) 241-1183 or 800-624-8378.

*-by Shawn Newton-*

## Glaucoma Q & A



*This is what people with normal vision see.*



*People who have glaucoma see with reduced peripheral vision.*

### Q: What is Glaucoma?

**A:** Glaucoma is an eye disease in which the passages that allow fluid in the eye to drain become clogged or blocked. This results in the amount of fluid in the eye building up and causing increased pressure inside the eye. The increased pressure damages the optic nerve which connects the eye to the brain. The optic nerve carries visual information to the brain. A damaged optic nerve results in less information sent to the brain and a loss of vision.

### Q: What causes Glaucoma?

**A:** The exact cause of glaucoma is unknown and currently, it cannot be prevented. It is one of the leading causes of blindness in the United States. If the disease is detected early enough and treated promptly, glaucoma can be controlled with little or no further vision loss. That's why a glaucoma test is vital to good vision.

**THE SIGHT CENTER RECOMMENDS PEOPLE HAVE A GLAUCOMA TEST ONCE EVERY TWO YEARS. THOSE IN THE HIGH RISK CATEGORY SHOULD HAVE ONE EVERY YEAR.**

### Q: What are the symptoms?

**A:** Glaucoma is often referred to as "The Sneak Thief of Sight." A certain type of the disease displays absolutely no symptoms while another type of glaucoma may be accompanied by blurred vision, loss of side vision, appearance of colored rings around lights and pain or redness in the eyes.

### Q: Who is at risk?

**A:** Glaucoma occurs most often in people:

- ▲over age 40
- ▲who have a family history of the disease
- ▲who are very nearsighted
- ▲who are diabetic
- ▲who are African American

## Did you know ?

▲Someone goes blind every 11 minutes.

▲The blind population is expected to double between 1990 and 2000 and double again between 2000 and 2010.

▲One out of every 20 preschoolers has an eye problem, most commonly called "lazy eye," which can cause permanent eye damage if not corrected by age 6.

▲2,500 eye injuries occur in the workplace everyday.

▲Two million Americans have glaucoma and half of them don't even know it.

▲Half of all blindness is preventable if detected early enough.



# MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

## OAC Grant To Promote Sight Impaired Artists

The Sight Center recently received a planning grant from the Ohio Arts Council to implement an arts component in the agency's recreation program.

Grant money helped establish a committee of people (sighted and vision impaired) from different art mediums to study how to promote visually impaired artists and their work.

The agency is seeking additional funding from OAC to implement the committee's recommendations.

The Sight Center acknowledges the following memorial contributions:

**Mr. & Mrs. Robert Mouch**  
**Calvin Abbott**

Brian and Karen Keaton

**Alice Adamczewski**  
Melvin & Mary Ann Emahiser  
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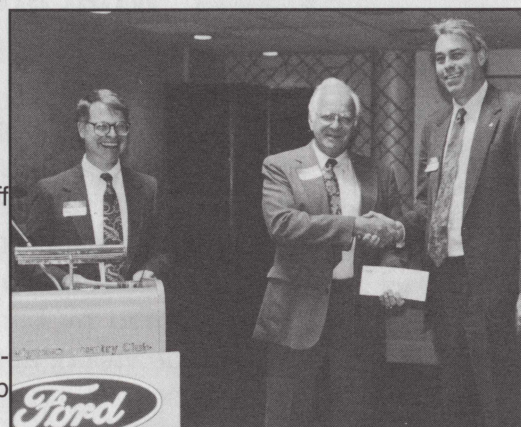
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Barry McEwen, Sight Center President & CEO (far right) receives a check from Ford Company officials.

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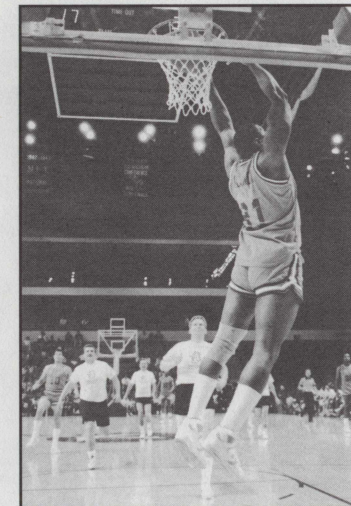
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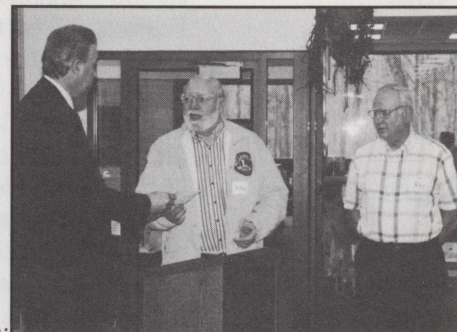
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